

DETAILED ACTION

In response to applicant's communication on 8/26/2009 regarding the last Office action, the following corrective action is taken.

The period for reply of 3 MONTHS set in said Office Action is restarted to begin with the mailing date of this letter.

Claims 1-23, 32-42, 44-52 are pending and have been considered below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-4, 6-7, 1—18, 20-23, 32-42, and 44-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Outlook (Microsoft Outlook 2000, Copyright 1995-1999, Fig. 1.)

Claim 1, 32, 44: Outlook discloses a computer program product tangibly embodied on machine-readable storage device, the product comprising instructions operable to cause data processing apparatus to:

- a. display a table of data (Fig. 3, showing various columns and rows: name, type, size, modified, created, in Folder, etc.) as an element of a graphical user

interface display and display a set of markers (Fig. 3: e.g. name, size, type), each marker being associated with a row of the table or each marker being associated with a column of the table (Fig. 3, each of the name, size and type corresponds to their column), the table of data having a plurality of sort keys having a specified sort key order (Fig. 3-7, the markers can be dragged to a “Drag a column header here to group by that column” area for sorting) including a most significant sort key (Fig. 7: Name, the top most marker indicates the most significant sort key), each sort key being a row or each sort key being a column of the table (the sort keys in Fig. 7, correspond to the data in their respective columns of the table from Fig. 3), each sort key having a sort direction (Fig. 7, triangles), each sort key having a position in the sort key order (Fig. 7, name, then size, then type, as shown graphically);

- b. receive from the user an input gesture selecting a marker (Fig. 8, the Type marker is selected and is dragged to the left - top corner of Name, where it is dropped);
- c. establish the row or column associated with the user-selected marker as the most significant sort key (Fig. 9, shows the sort key order as it after the drag is performed, now the type marker is at the top, while name and size is pushed down the chain) in the sort key order in response to the input gesture including maintaining the sort direction (Fig. 9, name, size and type are kept in ascending order as evidenced by the triangles) from the sort key order, and maintain the

positions and sort directions of two or more remaining sort keys in the sort key order (Fig. 8-9, size which followed name, is still after name);

- d. sort the table of data according to the plurality sort keys, the sort key order, and the sort key directions in response to the input gesture (Fig. 8-9, the table of data is sorted first by type as shown by “Folder” type at the top, then by name, and last by size); and
- e. display the sorted data (the sorted data is automatically displayed as shown in Fig. 8-9.)

Claim 2, 33: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, wherein the user input gesture is a selecting gesture for selecting the marker (Fig. 8.)

Claim 3: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, wherein the user input gesture comprises a pointing device action on the marker (Fig. 8.)

Claim 4: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, wherein the user input gesture is a mouse click on the marker (Fig. 8.)

Claim 6, 35, 45: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, further comprising instructions to: represent the sort key order visually in the table by displaying the markers with a pattern of distinct visual properties (Fig. 8, by using position to indicated order.)

Claim 7: Outlook discloses the product of claim 6, wherein the pattern of distinct visual properties indicates the sort key order (Fig. 8, the lower in the page the markers are in relation to others, the less significant it is.)

Claim 10: Outlook discloses the product of claim 6 wherein the pattern of distinct visual properties comprises a set of distinct non-textual representations identifying a sequence of each sort key in the sort key order (Fig. 8.)

Claim 11, 37, 47: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, further comprising instructions to: determine whether the user-selected marker is associated with the most significant key and if the user-selected marker is associated with the most significant key, change a sort direction of the most significant key (Fig. 12, clicking on the markers changes the sort direction, the triangles flips over), and if the user selected marker is not associated with the most significant key, establish the row or column associated with the user-selected marker as the most significant sort key (Fig. 7-9, Outlook includes instructions that at any point, including when the marker is not most significant sort key, the users may at their discretion change the order, by following the methodology as described in relation to claim 1. The “establish the row or column” portion of the instructions that this claim recites to, does no limit whether the “establishing” is in response to user action, or other automatic computer action, merely

Art Unit: 2174

that there exist instructions (i.e. code capable for that to be done)), and maintain the positions and the sort directions of the remaining sort keys in the sort key order (Fig. 9.)

Claim 12, 34, 20, 39, 49: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1 wherein the user input gesture is a dragging gesture for selecting the marker by dragging the marker to an area on the graphical user interface display (Fig. 7-9.)

Claim 13: Outlook discloses the product of claim 12 wherein the area on the graphical user interface display comprises an icon (Fig. 8.)

Claim 14: Outlook disclose the product of claim 12 wherein the area on the graphical user interface display comprises a sort key list window (Fig. 8, top portion right under Local Disk (C:).)

Claim 15: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, wherein the number of sort keys in the sort key order for the table of data is limited to a predetermined number greater than one (number of column headers, i.e. the grouping is limited to a preprogrammed set of column headers, Fig. 8; grouping is limited to four, Fig. 13.)

Claim 16, 38, 48: Outlook discloses the product of claim 15, wherein the table of data has one or more sort keys that are not part of the sort key order (Fig. 7, e.g. Created, In Folder) having the predetermined number of sort keys (see claim 15), the sort key order

Art Unit: 2174

including the most significant sort key (Fig. 7, Name) and a least significant sort key (Fig. 7, Type) the product further comprising instructions to:

- a. determine whether a row or column associated with a user-selected marker is associated with a sort key in the sort key order (column markers previously dragged over to the grouping area, such as Type in Fig. 6-7 are removed as choices for further grouping, Fig. 7), and
- b. when the row or column associated with the user-selected marker is associated with a sort key not in the sort key order (e.g. Fig. 12-13, "In Folder" which was not part of the sort key order), remove the least significant sort key from the sort key order (Fig. 9-10, Name is dragged off the sort key order and is removed), adding the row or column associated with the user-selected marker to the sort key order (Fig. 11-12, In Folder is added to the sort key order), establish the row or column associated with the user-selected marker as the most significant sort key, and maintain the positions and the sort directions of the remaining sort keys in the sort key order (Fig. 9-10, Outlook includes instructions that when the marker is not most significant sort key, the users may at their discretion change the order, by following the methodology as described in relation to claim 1), and
- c. when the row or column associated with a user-selected marker is associated with a sort key in the sort key order, establish the row or column associated with the user-selected marker as the most significant sort key, and maintain the positions and the sort directions of the remaining sort keys in the sort key order (Fig. 7-9.)

Claim 17, 36, 46: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, further comprising instructions to: receive from the user an input gesture deselecting a marker associated with a sort key (Fig. 9); and remove the sort key associated with the deselected marker from the sort key order while maintaining the positions and the sort directions of the remaining sort keys in the sort key order (Fig. 10.)

Claim 18: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1, wherein the marker is a column header (Fig. 3, 7.)

Claim 21, 40, 50: Outlook discloses the product of claim 20 wherein the area of the graphical user interface display is an icon, the product further comprising instructions to:

- a. receive from the user an input gesture selecting the icon, the icon being associated with a separate sort key list window (Fig. 8-9); and
- b. display, in the separate sort key list window on the graphical user interface display, a list of sort keys comprising the one or more sort keys for the table of data having a sort key order including the most significant sort key (Fig. 8-9.)

Claim 22, 41, 51: Outlook discloses the product of claim 20 wherein the area of the graphical user interface display is a separate sort key list window, further comprising instructions to: display in the separate sort key list window, a list of sort keys comprising

Art Unit: 2174

the one or more sort keys for the table of data having a sort key order including the most significant sort key (Fig. 8.)

Claim 23, 42, 52: Outlook discloses a computer program product tangibly embodied on machine-readable storage device for interacting with a user, the product comprising instructions operable to cause data processing apparatus to:

- a. display a table of data (Fig. 7) as an element of a graphical user interface display, and display a set of markers (Fig. 7: name, size, type), each marker being associated with a row of the table or each marker being associated with a column of the table (Fig. 3), the table of data having a plurality of sort keys having a specified sort key order including a most significant sort key (Fig. 7), each sort key being a row or each sort key being a column of the table, each sort key having a sort direction (Fig. 7, triangles), each sort key having a position in the sort key order (Fig. 7, name, then size, then type);
- b. receive from the user one input gesture selecting a marker by dragging the marker from location associated with a particular row or column of the table to a location within an area of the graphical user interface display (Fig. 7-9);
- c. establish the row or column associated with the user-selected marker as a sort key having an intermediate position in the sort key order defined by the location within the area in response to the input gesture (Fig. 11-12) including maintaining the sort direction from the sort key order, and maintain the positions and sort

- directions of the remaining sort keys in the sort key order including a most significant sort key and a least significant sort key (Fig. 11-12);
- d. sort the table of data according to the plurality of sort keys, the sort key order, and the sort key directions in response to the input gesture (Fig. 11-12); and
- e. display the sorted data (Fig. 12.)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 5 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Outlook.

Claim 5: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1. Outlook shows the use of a single click to as user input gesture. Outlook does not explicitly disclose wherein the user input gesture is a double mouse click on the marker. The Examiner takes Official Notice that it is old and well known in the computing art to use a double click in lieu of a single click for selection. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize a double click. One would have been motivated to use a double click method of selection so as to meet the expectations of Window OS users.

Claim 19: Outlook discloses the product of claim 1. However Outlook does not explicitly disclose wherein the marker is a row header. The Examiner takes Official Notice that it is old and well known in computing arts to use row headers. One would have been motivated to use row headers as opposed to column as it would be have been a mere mechanical rearranging of parts (from column to row) of an invention involving only routine skill in the art. In re Japikse, 86 USPQ 70.

5. Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Outlook in view of Lane et al., (5,704,051.)

Claim 8, 9: Outlook discloses the product of claim 6. However, Outlook does not explicitly disclose wherein the pattern of distinct visual properties comprises a set of distinct colors. Lane discloses a graphical user interface including color coding using a pattern of distinct visuals properties comprising a set of distinct colors (5:57-61.) Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a well known technique of color coding patterns to improve similar graphical user interfaces of Lane and Outlook in the same manner to yield a predictable result of a graphical user interface that utilize color in a meaningful way to readily convey useful information to the user, as suggested in Outlook.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-23, 32-42, 44-52 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew Belousov whose telephone number is (571) 270-1695. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (alternate Fri off) EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dennis Chow can be reached on (571) 272-7767. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-3800.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Steven P Sax/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2174

AB
8/26/2009

Application/Control Number: 10/698,804
Art Unit: 2174

Page 13